Korea and IUFRO Report

By: Phil Cannon

Between August 19th and August 28th, 2010, the author was in Korea. The main purpose of this trip was to participate in the XXIII IUFRO (International Union of Forest Research Organizations) World Congress. There was a pre-conference tour on August 21st and 22nd. The conference was from August 23rd - 28th.

This report will not attempt to cover all of the information that was exchanged during this conference but rather will focus on the highlights from the author's point of view.

Korea has taken giant strides in its development over the past 55 years; this includes a phenomenal job of reforestation (less than 0.5% of all forest lands are currently without forest). Korea's culture, economy, infrastructure and organization are also marvelous to behold.

The conference had, approximately, 4,680 forest registered atterndees, 580 oral presentations, and 1,400 research posters. Additionally, there were, roughly, 80 display booths from forest research organizations around the world. (Note: abstracts for all presentations are available on request).

The author gave one paper (on guava rust), listened to approximately 40 presentations, reviewed about 60 posters and manned the US Forest Service booth for six hours. Other presentations from California were from Steve Seybold, Matteo Garbelotto, Phil van Mantgem and Nancy Grulke.

A personal goal achieved, through some intense networking, was the recruitment of about 20 additional scientists to both the *Puccinia psidii* partnership and to the Pacific Root and Butt Rot Club. Much fuller reports will be forthcoming on both of these networks.

A profound amount of new (to me) information was gleaned for six relatively new diseases (and insect-disease complexes). Conceivably, some of these problems could become established and wreak havoc in R5 forests. The new oak wilt problem, caused by the ambrosia beetle-vectored *Raffaelea* pathogen was the most commonly documented disease problem (I found lots of this on a short *ad hoc* field trip up a mountain that I made my first day in Korea). It could become a show-stopper in the US.

The congress provided me a chance to make new international contacts and to re-establish ties with research colleagues from the following countries: Algeria, Australia, Brazil, Burma (2), Canada (2), China (2), Costa Rica (3), France, Ghana (3), India (2), Italy (2), Japan(2), Korea (15), Malaysia (3), Mexico (2), New Zealand (3), Poland (3), Russia (1), Saipan, Scotland (2), and South Africa (2).

Discussions of substance were held with some USFS personnel including Ned Klopfenstein (the evolution and distribution of *Puccinia psidii*), Mee Sook Kim (on molecular genetics), Sam Foster (the role of the Rocky Mountain Research Station), and Nancy Grulke (relevant activities for the Western Threat Center).

Without any doubt, the highlight of this trip was an overnight stay in a Buddist temple. A very instructive and inspirational experience. The Buddist view on caring for forest resources was well explained by the masters. There were about 150 IUFRO participants. Most, I think, were equally moved.